



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DECEMBER 14, 2007

CONTACT:

MICHELLE MOWERY JOHNSON  
(615) 313-4707 (OFFICE)

## **TENNESSEE REHABILITATION CENTER GRADUATES READY FOR WORK** *STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OVERCOME BARRIERS TO REACH SUCCESS*

SMYRNA, Tenn. – Dozens of young men and women with significant disabilities proudly walked or rolled their wheelchairs up the ramp to the stage and accepted their graduation certificates from the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center (TRC) in Smyrna today. Sixty-nine graduates representing 34 counties overcame serious barriers to complete their vocational programs. They are now ready to enter the job market.

"These graduates have shown a dedication to improving their lives and their opportunities to succeed in the workplace," said Tennessee Department of Education Commissioner Lana Seivers, the keynote speaker at today's graduation. "Each of these students has benefitted greatly from the hard work and commitment the teachers at the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center have shown to providing them with excellent career training."

DHS Commissioner Gina Lodge also commended the TRC students in the JOBS (Job Objectives and Behavioral Services) and Warehouse programs on their partnership with the Governor's Books from Birth Foundation. This fall, more than two dozen students sorted, re-packaged and shipped out 120,000 books to 2,400 child care centers that serve low income children

"This massive assembly-line project was a win-win for our TRC students and the children we serve across the state," said Commissioner Lodge. "The students gained valuable work experience, while the children in daycare across the state received a 50-book Imagination Library set."

Students who attend TRC have a wide variety of disabilities, from traumatic brain injuries to blindness or mental retardation. Many must undergo physical or occupational therapy or take part in the transitional living skills program to better assist them as they leave the TRC and move back home or re-locate to new communities and enter the work world. The students can participate in ten diverse training programs offered at TRC, including Business Education Training, Hospitality and Food Service Training, and Custodial and Warehouse Training. Students are referred to TRC by vocational rehabilitation counselors in their home counties.

The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center is a state-operated comprehensive rehabilitation facility. It is one of only nine such centers in the nation. Services are provided on campus, and the majority of clients live on site while receiving services. The length of programs offered at TRC varies, depending upon the individual client's interest, abilities and needs. TRC serves more than 1,300 Tennesseans with disabilities each year. Since opening its doors in 1977, TRC has served more than 28,000 individuals.

For more information about TRC, the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Tennessee Department of Human Services, visit <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/rehabilitation.htm>

The following page contains a county-by-county breakdown of graduates:

CITIZENS PLAZA, 15TH FLOOR  
400 DEADERICK STREET  
NASHVILLE, TN 37248  
615.313.4700

First Name	Last Name	City	County
Chris	Burum	Oak Ridge	Anderson
Keshia	Moulder	Shelbyville	Bedford
Shawna	Langston	Huntingdon	Carroll
Matt	Gibson	Bells	Crockett
George	Earley	Crossville	Cumberland
Sheena	Garrett	Fairfield Glade	Cumberland
Jerry "Maurice"	McMullin	Nashville	Davidson
Ronald	Gray	Nashville	Davidson
Christopher	White	Hermitage	Davidson
Lenny	Wilkins	Nashville	Davidson
Paul	Kimbrough	Antioch	Davidson
Joseph	Robertson	Hermitage	Davidson
Michael	Davis	Newbern	Dyer
Nancy	Karlson	Winchester	Franklin
Jennifer	Austin	Cowen	Franklin
Thomas	Ingram	Pulaski	Giles
Preston	Biel	Greeneville	Greene
Kevin	Dowdy	Chattanooga	Hamilton
Aaron	Nash	Chattanooga	Hamilton
Rachel	Johnson	Ooltewah	Hamilton
Eric	Smith	Hixson	Hamilton
Jeramy	Jones	Chattanooga	Hamilton
Robert	Bradley	Cottage Grove	Henry
John	Weis	Nunnely	Hickman
Carri	Fizzano	Knoxville	Knox
Ian	Walters	Knoxville	Knox
Jillian	Gibson	Knoxville	Knox
Donte'	Mason	Ripley	Lauderdale
Amy	Bischoff	Pulaski	Lincoln
James	Ripperger	Dixon Springs	Macon
Kristen	Kelley	Jackson	Madison
Markeshia	Brooks	Jackson	Madison
Jessica	Lewis	Jackson	Madison
Jessica	Parker	Jackson	Madison
Edward	Wright	Bells	Madison

First Name	Last Name	City	County
John	Barner	Columbia	Maury
Matt	Matthews	Culleoka	Maury
James	Montgomery	Columbia	Maury
Amy	McLemore	Sweetwater	Monroe
Glenn	Hudson	Clarksville	Montgomery
Kristopher	Bembrey	Clarksville	Montgomery
Kyle	Pantozzi	Delano	Polk
Adam	Johnson	Cookeville	Putnam
Nathan	Davis	Goodlettsville	Robertson
James	Lowe	Murfreesboro	Rutherford
Ryan	Thorn	Murfreesboro	Rutherford
Nicholas	Watson	LaVergne	Rutherford
Patricia	Colvin	LaVergne	Rutherford
Frank	Daniel	Smyrna	Rutherford
M'lyce	Menning	Eagleville	Rutherford
Chris	Fisher	Sevierville	Sevier
Elan	Ashter	Memphis	Shelby
Jonathan	McMillian	Memphis	Shelby
Marketa	Rowe-Malone	Memphis	Shelby
Christopher	Brandon	Cordova	Shelby
Rebecca	Daniels	Memphis	Shelby
Sabrina	Nyugen	Memphis	Shelby
Kasee	McClain	Bristol	Sullivan
Rachael	Vanderpool	Gallatin	Sumner
Michael	Romano	Portland	Sumner
Elisha	Brewer	Luttrell	Union
William	Arp	Johnson City	Washington
April	Morris	Sparta	White
Austin	Carter	Brentwood	Williamson
Danny	Mercado	Franklin	Williamson
James	Green	Primm Springs	Williamson
Willis	Emler	Lebanon	Wilson
Kimberly	Coode	Lebanon	Wilson
Justin	Swigert	Lebanon	Wilson